THE LAW IGNORED CONTEMPTUOUSLY BY ALL THE BIG CITY NEWSPAPERS-COUNTRY EDI-TORS WHO MADE THEMSELVES RIDICU-

LOUS IN OBEYING ITS PROVISIONS. Francisco, June 13 (Special).-No greater fiasco in legislation was ever seen than the News-Signature law, which went into effect throughout California on April 19. This law, of which a pretty full digest was printed at the time in The Tribune, was intended by its framers to put an end to what they termed "the onslaughts in the sensational press on men and measures of promi-nence and repute"; yet, though it was drawn by two lawyers of wide reputation, it proved to be so weak and crude that the leading San Francisco newspapers united in ignoring it completely, and the country newspapers that started out by observing it have all abandoned the signature system, as they have found that it serves no other end than to make them ridiculous. A few newspapers had fun out of the law, and some of their jokes are NOBODY BEGINS PROCEEDINGS.

Many of the country editors have called upon the framers of the law and the Governor, who signed it; to take action against the stiff-necked city journals, but thus far no one has come out into the open and begun proceedings for failure to observe the law.

The essential provision of the law was this

The essential provision of the law was this:

Every article, statement or editorial contained in any newspaper or other printed publication, printed or published in this State, which by writing or printing tends to blacken the memory of one who is dead, or to impeach the honesty, integrity, virtue or reputation, or publish the natural or alleged defects of one who is alive, and thereby expose him or her to public hatred, contempt or ridicule, must be supplemented by the true name of the writer of such article, statement or editorial, signed or printed at the end thereof.

The most virious feature of the law is that its

The most vicious feature of the law is that it provides that half the fine of \$1,000 for failure to observe its provisions is to go to the person who begins the suit. If the law had been deemed constitutional, a score of "shysters" and blackmailers come forward to secure this reward, for the proof of violation of the law would be very simple, and would require no witnesses. LEGISLATORS' FEELINGS HURT.

The men who drafted this bill and pushed it

the Legislature were H. V. Morehouse and Grove L. Johnson. Both were members of the last Legislature, and both had suffered severely at the hands of caricaturists and correspondents. united to devise some means of muzzling the press, but the wonder is that, with their knowledge f the law, they should not have hit upon something which could be enforced. Their primary object was to compel the printing of the signature of the writer of libelious articles or of the artist who drew libelious caricatures. In order to effect this overshot the mark and perpetrated a giolative monstrosity which has excited the de the whole country. Both men have records and peculiarities which lend themselves to and since the Signature and the Antiertoon law went into effect they have suffered severely in print, but thus far neither has sought cetion or revenge in the courts.

The proprietors of the leading daily newspapers Francisco have formed a publishers' assolation for mutual protection. It was the opinion I the counsel of the various members of the association that compliance with the Signature law ald be equivalent to admitting that the articles signed were libellous. Hence the association was sovised to ignore the law entirely as safer than Then, if any "pernicious netivity shown by shyster lawyers and others eager to gain a part of the fines imposed for violation of the law, all the proprietors would be banded together as defendants in a test case. This advice proved to be good, for obedience to the absurd law would have made the columns of the large news papers ridiculous, as the provisions of the law did not exempt ordinary local items from signature.

#### SOME NEWSPAPER SPECIMENS.

On April 19, the day the law went into effect, some amusing specimens of humor, conscious as well as unconscious, were presented. "The Sacramento Bee," a newspaper which is never afraid of expressing a downright opinion in vigorous Engwas a "freak" paper worthy of adding to a etion of curies. The leading article was an exposure of the absurdities of the new law. signed by Charles Kenny McClatchy, one of the two brothers who own the paper. Then in short parrgraphs, each signed with McClatchy's full name, the law and its framers were pilloried in E. Suttle, bilarious style. Here are a few specimens, the Macfarlane. iments to the Governor of California, who was weak enough to make the "fool" bill a law:

To you, Grove Lachrymose Johnson, the Veepin' lliam of the Valley, a royal salaam!
To-day, dearly beloved, goes into effect a law afred upon the statute books of the State of Calimia by a parcel of escaped lunatics who, under e mislaken grace of God, somehow found sanctur in the Legislature.

The dust in the street is very annoying, and it is pretty hard to keep it out of the houses. After a wrile, we guess the sprinklers will come out, and then there will not be so much dust on the streets.

EDWARD JOHN DEVLIN.

COUNTRY EDITORS SEVERE.

Bee" did but many country editors flatly expressed their opinions of its idiocy and signed their opin-ions. Here is the conclusion of an article in "The Colfax Sentinel," with the editor's signature:

can McPherson, rejoices in the reputation of writ-ing the worst doggered of any newspaper man in He lived up to his reputation by ending a prose article on the new law with this execrable couplet, in which he coined a new word:

arrested at the sophomoric stage. Here is the opening of a ponderous fulmination against the law:

Ing of a ponderous fulmination against the law:

The signature bill, the vile spawn hatched and fathered by a gang of the most peccant noodles who ever corrupted legislation, has been ignored by the editors who will not bend the head for the yoke that would enslave the giant advocate of liberty. The pernicious law has for its venal object the strangling of the bequeathed prerogatives of an enlightened and honorable profession, that blackguards, swindlers, rotten politicians and the fag end of humanity might have unchecked license for their profligacy. So long as there exists a fearless press the State will not be subjected to the infamy that the infoultous law would breed. It is prejudicial to the fair name of California.

shown himself in the open, doubtless for the reason that he feared the ridicule that would be heaped upon him. Grove Johnson, who is regarded as one of the ablest lawyers in the State, and who helped Morehouse draft the bill, has made no effort to see that it is enforced.

#### THE ONLY OBEDIENT EDITOR.

Most of the California editors have dropped the signatures from their editorial and local pages. About the only man who still attempts to obey the

who had been libelled the real name of the author of the defamatory article. It gave no new advantages to one unjustly dealt with by a newspaper, as the California libel law is severe. It would also put a premium on one of the worst offences—the encouragement of litigation for the profit to be derived from a share in the rewards of libel suits.

COLER FIGHTS THE ALDERMEN

CONTROLLER WANTS TO COMPEL ACTION ON THE BOND ISSUE.

COUNCILMAN M'GARRY SAYS HE CAN FORCE IT THROUGH, BUT OTHERS USE DE-

FIANT LANGUAGE-A PRECE DENT IN THE CASE OF

QUEENS COUNTY. Controller Coler yesterday made : rangements to have John McQuade, the treasurer of the Tammany organization and a contractor in aqueduct work for the city, make application in the Supreme Court a mandamus to compel the Municipal Assembly to take ministerial action on the bond issues that have been authorized by the Beard of Estimate and Apportionment, and which have been obstructed by the refusal of Councilmen or Aldermen to vote for them. Mr. McQuade will make his application or them. Mr. McQuade will make ris application on the ground that work which he performed under contract for the city, and was completed eight months ago, is still unpaid for, because of the refusal of the Municipal Assembly to pass the bond issue authorized by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment on October 31, 1898. The proceedings will be under Section No. 178 of the charter. The Board of Aldermen adjourned immediately after opening its session yesterday afternoon, in respect to the memory of Alderman Siefke. The chamber was draped in black. The Aldermen will gather at City Hall at 11:30 a. m. to-day and go in carriages to the late home of Mr. Siefke and escort the body to the Marble Collegiate Church, Twenty ninth-st. and Fifth-ave., where the funeral will take place at 1 p. m. The Board will meet again at 1 p. m. on Friday. The Aldermen yesterday expected that a mandamus would be procured by Controller Cooler, but at 1:30 p. m. it was learned that the Controller had decided to put off the serving of the writ until next week. There will be a long debate over the power of the courts to mandamus a legislative body and the papers will be transmitted to the Corporation Counsel for advice.

by members of the Board of Aldermen and Council, after both bodies had adjourned. The Controller said:

"If there is going to be a fight between the Finance Department and the Municipal Assembly it might as well come on now as at any other time, and let us have it out. The present condition of affairs is intolerable. Take the Croton water awards. At present the city is paying 6 per cent on money berrowed, whereas if the hond issue was authorized the city could sell the bonds at about 3 per cent."

"Have you any precedent for a mandamus?" Mr. Coler was asked.

"We have a precedent in the case of the Queens County Supervisors. They did something of the same kind, and were compelled to act by the courts."

county Supervisors. They did something of the same kind, and were compelled to act by the courts."

"Alderman Woodward said yesterday that the Aldermen would do as they d—n pleased," the Controller was told.

"That language smacks very much like the language once used by John Y. McKane," said the Controller. "You know what followed."

Councilman Francisco said that the Municipal Assembly had the right to act as they pleased on these and other matters, and could not be dictated to. "I will not allow the Controller to make an ass of me," he added.

Councilman McGarry said that if Controller Coler was in earnest about it he could force the bond issues through. "The men who are obstructing the bond issues are mere automatons. They are the little figures that are moved on the chess board."

Mr. McGarry has always voted for the bond issues. He is not in sympathy with the Brooklyn Democratic organization.

Councilman Frank J. Goodwin said it was not the fault of the Finance Committee, of which he is chairman, but of the individual members from outside boroughs.

side boroughs.

The members of the Council from Manhattan, Richmond and The Bronx, except Councilman Murray, all indorsed the stand of the Controller.

Vice-President Oakley said: "I have done all in my power to have these bond issues passed by the Council. I cordially approve the action of the Controller. I think some action should be taken that would bring members to a realization of their duty." Councilman French, of Brooklyn, said that he would not vote for the Long Island water supply bond issue, as he thought it unfair.

WALLACE MACFARLANE SUED.

A FORMER CLIENT CHARGES HIM WITH UNPRO-

Ex-United States District-Attorney Wallace Macfarlane was the defendant in a suit on trial before Justice Andrews in the Supreme Court yesterday brought against him by a former client, Mrs. Marie E. Suttle, who seeks to recover \$10,000 from Mr.

Mr. Macfarlane was her counsel, and as such she ordered him to bid in certain lands advertised for sale in the Real Estate Exchange. The lands referred to were sold by the assignee of Mrs. Suttle's husband, William J. Suttle, from whom Mrs. Suttle was divorced a year before.

In May, 1888, Mrs. Suttle asserts, she went to the office of Mr. Macfarlane in company with Herbert Terrell. She told her counsel that Mr. Terrell had \$1,200 with which he was to bid in the property in case it did not go above that figure.

Suttle, went to the sale, presumably to act under her instructions. When they returned Mr. Mac-

suttle, went to the sale, presumably to act under her instructions. When they returned Mr. Macfarlane told Mrs. Suttle that Mr. Terrell had not bid in the property, although it was sold for \$500. He said that a man named T. C. Smith, who was acting for him, had bid it in. When Mrs. Suttle remonstrated she says Mr. Macfarlane told her that Smith was acting for him, and that her interests would be looked out for.

In 1897, however, Mrs. Suttle learned that a decree had been entered in the Supreme Court in which the title to the property was vested in Smith, subject only to her dower right in it. Subsequently the property was sold for \$7.00.

In her prayer for relief Mrs. Suttle says: "By reason of his (Macfarlane's) unskilful, unprofessional and wilfully negligent acts in advising, as well as failing to carry out my instructions, and by reason of the breach of the trust reposed in him as my attorney and counsel, I have suffered damages in the amount of \$10.000."

In his answer to the complaint Mr. Macfarlane denies all the allegations made by Mrs. Suttle touching upon his alleged unskilful and unprofessional conduct. After making his denials Mr. Macfarlane puts in a counter-chaim for \$3.00 against Mrs. Suttle for professional services.

but who for years has been known about the Polo Grounds and Washington Park, in Brooklyn, as "Well, well, well," was a prisoner in the Centre Street Police Court yesterday morning, charged with disorderly conduct. For years Woods has attended all the ball games in and around New-York, and his familiar "Well, well, well," is known to all those who visit the games. His cry can be heard, so peculiar is his voice, above even the shouts of the bleachers.

Yesterday morning for some reason he visited the Criminal Courts Building, and discovering that the rotunda had peculiar acoustic properties, he began to shout his familiar cry about the hig corridor and up the elevator shafts. Policeman Barry, of the Court Squad, placed him under arrest and took him before Magistrate Olmstead, who told him it was all right to shout at the ball games, but in a building where every one was busy it was not right, and he was guilty of disorderly conduct. He was allowed to go. with disorderly conduct. For years Woods has at-

THE METROPOLITAN'S CHANGES.

PRESIDENT VREELAND SAYS THE NEW POWER HOUSE WILL BE THE LARGEST IN THE WORLD.

deavoring just now to complete its system of troi-ley lines, and it is expected that its new power house will be finished early in the autumn. says that the new power house will be the largest in the world, as it will have a capacity of 70,000 horse-power. It will give all the power necessary for the running of the Broadway, Columbus and Lexington ave. lines. The power houses now in use will be retained in case of emergency. Speaking of equipping the present cable lines with electric motors, Mr. Vreeland said that work in connection with such proposed changes was now in progress on all three lines, but that it would be several months before it was completed. Much of the work, it was explained, is being done at night.

#### W. L. SEVERANCE DISCHARGED.

W. L. Severance, a lawyer, with an office in the New-York Life Insurance Building, was discharged in the Centre Street Court yesterday on a charge of furnishing libelious matter for publication.

WANT SAMPLE BOOKS PRINTED HERE. Criminal Branch of the Supreme Court yesterday afternoon. The jury was out four hours. Young was indicted for murder in the first degree for the killing of George Eberhardt, who tried to capture him on the morning of January 21 last, after Young had committed a burglary. The Typothetæ of the City of New-York met yesterday to take action as to the admission of sample books free of duty. They passed resolutions pro-testing against such admission. They say books

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now worth \$1,000,000 annually are admitted free of duty, and that a correct tariff will make the import-ers have all this work done here. The Board of Appraisers recently decided to place a 60 per cent duty on importers' sample books, and this action the Typothetic will take the matter to the Secretary of the Treasury at Washington. MURDER IN THE SECOND DEGREE.

Duncan Young, allas "Scotty." was found gulfty

of murder in the second degree by a jury in the

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Ah there, Henry Theophilus Gage! Greetings likewise to you, Hotspur Vallant More-

In another part of the same issue of "The "Bee" all the local news items were signed, so that in reading the columns after a routine report of the Board of Aldermen or an account of a lecture one

No other paper openly ridiculed the law as "The

The requirements of the law are stupid and mali-cious. In the attemnt of the lawmakers to learn the identity of editorial writers of the metropolitan press a burden has been placed upon every pub-lisher in the State.

The law plays to the hands of the sneak and the informer. It is an example of variegated asinine stupidity, idiotic and infamous; it is unconstitu-tional; it is rotten. IVAN HENRY PARKER. The Editor of "The Santa Cruz Sentinel," Dun-

We, too, want to be sure, And just signnature. 'The Sonora Democratic Banner' is evidently edited by a man whose mental development was

"The Los Angeles Herald" on May 10, in a signed editorial by Lionel A. Sheldon, calls upon Senator Morehouse to enforce his Signature law, and declares that he will be charged with cowardice if he permits this open and contemptuous violation of the law by most of the newspapers of the State. Other country editors who had been observing the law in good faith joined in this appeal to the maker of the measure, asking him to come out and bring some test suits. But Morehouse has not

About the only man who still attempts to obey the law is Jerome A. Hart, Editor of "The Argonaut," a weekly literary paper of this city. Hart declared at the outset that the law was an absurdity, but he decided to obey it. Instead of putting his name at the end of every editorial, he printed in the smallest size of type the following signature: "Jahart." This includes his initials and his surname, but technically it is an evasion of the law, which provides that a man's real name shall be signed. Certainly this condensed signature, without capitals and with the initials jammed up with the surname, cannot be called a genuine signature. nature.

It is probable that nothing will ever be done to enforce the California Signature law. Its only effect, if it had been obeyed, would be to give one

The Controller was told yesterday about several expressions of opinion regarding his move, made by members of the Board of Aldermen and Coun-

FESSIONAL CONDUCT.

In her complaint Mrs. Suttle asserts that in 1888

Messrs, Macfarlane and Terrell, according to Mrs

"WELL, WELL, WELL" ARRESTED. Frank Woods, who refuses to give his address,

The Metropolitan Street Rallway Company is endent Vreeland has issued a statement in which he says that the new power house will be the largest

C. Loftus was the complainant. Ex-Assistant District-Attorney Vernon M. Davis appeared for the complainant.

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Passengers from and to America have the choice of

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4—The Bristol & Bath Route.

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WINDSOR CASTLE—The home of the Queen.
Haggage checked through. Express trains
tre run to LONDON from PLYMOUTH for the
convenience of passengers landing at that
out.

ROYAL MAIL ROUTE

Hotels in the British Isles.

ADELPHI HOTEL

MORECOMBE BAY MIDLAND HOTEL

Kenilworth- The Abbey" Hotel.

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